DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 163 900 IR 006 079

AUTHOR Costello, Timothy W.
TITLE Resource Sharing in New York State's Library Systems: A User's Perspective. Response prepared by Frances Clark.
INSTITUTION Governor's Commission on Libraries, Albany, N.Y.
PUB DATE Mar 78
NOTE 27p.; Position paper and response prepared for the New York State Governor's Conference on Libraries

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Libraries; *Library Cooperation; *Library Networks; Library Services; Library Technical Processes; Needs Assessment; Regional Cooperation; *Regional Planning; *Shared Services; State Aid; User Satisfaction (Information)
IDENTIFIERS *Access to Information; New York

ABSTRACT

In order to provide users with increased access to information and recreational materials, all libraries should be included in shared resource planning with the state providing incentive funding. The State Education Department would encompass all libraries, museums, botanical, and zoological entities to promote cooperative, imaginative library use. The state should be organized in library regions, establishing a network to increase access. Cross system possibilities include: (1) joining school and public libraries, although resource interchange rather than combination might prove more beneficial; (2) community access to university libraries; (3) cross-registration; (4) cooperative technical processing, further expedited by advanced technology; and (5) the development of a complete union catalog. Libraries could match hours with user needs and develop programs of operations research. Obstacles to regional development include jurisdictional questions, possible impeding laws, and scarcity of funds. (Author/MBR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED163900

News

New York State Governor's Conference on Libraries
State Capitol, Room 250, Albany. New York (518) 474-8826

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

RESOURCE SHARING IN NEW YORK STATE'S LIBRARY SYSTEMS
A USER'S PERSPECTIVE

Position Paper on
INTERRELATIONSHIPS AND RESOURCE SHARING

Prepared by

Timothy W. Costello
President, Adelphi University
Garden City, New York

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Esther M. Swanker

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

March 1978

Response Prepared by

Frances Clark
President, School Library Media Section
New York Library Association
and
Director, Library Media Services, Cornwall High School
Cornwall, New York

IR006079

Libraries exist to satisfy information needs of users and to provide recreational and cultural source materials. They find it difficult to do within budgets authorized by local and state government.

As our knowledge-oriented society explodes its information horizons and increased leisure-time provides occasion for more complex recreational and cultural experiences, demands for resources tax library capacity. Libraries then face a classical dilemma, an intellectual's version of the make or buy decision faced by business: to be more effective -- meeting an ever-widening array of user demands, speedily, at nearby locations in the hope of gaining user support for increased budgets; or to be more efficient -- by sharing resources among library systems and over large regional populations, at the cost of delayed delivery of materials and frustrated users who could threaten budget cuts but in the hope of spending the entire pool of library monies more wisely.

Conscientious and, perhaps worried, librarians, desirous of meeting needs and keeping user frustrations to a minimum, have also approached resource sharing from a different direction. Can we, they ask, share the burden of technical processes, that, despite notable progress toward streamlining, standardization, and centralization, and whether the local facility is a branch library, a school library, a university library, or a special library, still devour a huge portion of the library budget? Will the efficiency gained reduce effectiveness? Are there any real dollar and cents savings in centralized technical services?

The State Department of Education (SED) shares the worries of librarians and their trustees; and all concerned have taken some

positive steps. But, granting all of their recent progress, I view libraries as having come late to the issue of shared resources. The long tradition of the local public library's autonomy, based as it is in community pride and community-approved budgets, the pragmatic, if narrow, sense that tells school librarians that their books are educational tools and that their libraries are an integral and otherwise isolated part of the school system, the aloofness from community of the university, and the overreactive awareness in special libraries of who pays the bills have delayed recognition of the inevitability of resource sharing and have blinded librarians politically and functionally to the mutual benefits that result from increased cooperation.

Perhaps there is a subtler reason for the slow arrival in libraries or a full resource sharing program. Libraries are old-fashioned institutions; and library lovers, among whom I count myself, cherish this about them. In this electronic day and age they still treasure books. And librarians are old-fashioned people; they are the ones who treasure books enough to want them stored. Therefore, it is no doubt proper that libraries, as Pope warns, "Be not the first by whom the new are tried." The danger is they may be "the last to lay the old aside."

A user's easiest task is to criticize; having no responsibility for providing anything, he is free of the threat of retaliation. In compensation then for what might be taken for early criticism, let me now identify the steps I know that libraries have taken to share resources within and across systems.

1) Interlibrary loan has enriched access throughout the State. It shares resources across public, university, and some special libraries but does not include school libraries. Although partial union catalogues

are available in some regions, the service rarely provides immediate user access to locator information.

2) There are examples of schools and public libaries housed in the same building with access to the library from the school side and the street side. The "school" library becomes a section of the public library after hours, summers, and weekends. One hopes that there is harmony in the acquisition department.

3) On Long Island and elsewhere, I am sure, the public libraries, with financial help from both the State and local communities, have established a cooperative library system to share some costs, e.g., payroll processing and printing and at least one public service, e.g., interlibrary loan.

4) The State has fostered the creation of the Three R's Council to encourage intersystem cooperation but has left it relatively powerless by underfunding.

5) There are barely noticeable local and voluntary attempts at shared acquisitions among neighboring universities and in an even more limited way among some public libraries.

Having started late to think and plan in a total systems way, libraries have made progress recently. Much yet remains to be done; not all of it is blue sky in nature.

Assumptions.

The suggestions that follow have behind them a set of assumptions. They are:

1) Americans in increasing numbers turn to published information to help them choose their careers, raise their families, manage their

businesses, enjoy sex, indeed, shape in every imaginable way, their lives. Libraries should stand foremost in providing increasing access to that information.

2) Universities long ago gave up their role in loco parentis; libraries do so reluctantly. Today's society expects that anyone who knows enough to ask for a book deserves the opportunity of reading it; no matter what his age, level of education, or residence may be, even though he may request it from a highly professional library. Newspapers, welcomed into millions of homes, provide anyone who chooses to read information about medical advice, intimacies of sex, and advanced scientific information. Libraries can do no less.

3) Libraries need to understand what they rightfully should provide; but users also must understand what they have a right to expect. No library can meet the information needs of all its users -- immediately, in his own library, free. There are thus two extreme possibilities that any plan to share library resources must balance, both stemming from prideful efforts at unwise autonomy: the over zealous librarian who acquires highly specialized information sources for relatively few users, especially influential ones; and the library that frustrates legitimate user needs by refusing to join cross system resource sharing programs. I assume that, at least, theoretically no librarian supports either extreme.

4) Every library is in some sense a public facility since in one way or another every library receives public funds. Therefore any plan for sharing resources properly should include all library systems. The level of participation will vary with the degree of public funding.

What the State can do.

1) The Federal government has demonstrated that when it comes to eliciting cooperation, whether from large cities or small communities, money talks, more loudly than piously set forth dowry-less programs. From day care centers to urban renewal, the Federal government's matching programs have significantly effected social change. The matching qualification motivates local interest and prevents careless implementation.

If the State sets as its number one priority the promotion of resource sharing among the library systems, it follows that it should commit library monies to funding programs that share resources. It can even suggest the kinds of cooperation it prefers when money is available to back its suggestion. My first urge was to suggest that all of the State's contributed library money go to that cause. But serious disruption in library services throughout the State would result. A phased ten-year funding program to induce resource sharing, starting at the ten percent level would produce immediate results. Savings that would follow at the local levels could be used to cushion the shock of the gradual withdrawal of funding for basic programs.

2) To stretch the resource sharing program to affect all institutions that meet user information and cultural needs, the State Department of Education should structure itself to embrace in one office, headed by a Deputy Commissioner, all libraries, museums, botanical and zoological entities. Early funding of the incentive type described previously would produce rapid movement toward cooperation among these sometimes alien institutions.

Multi-media, multi-sensory, and multi-discipline are buzz words today as they have been before. State funded programs jointly sponsored by libraries and museums, et al., would offer users opportunity to read, to see, to touch and to hear -- a very powerful, and attractive aesthetic and informational experience, especially if music were to be added. Books in museums; art and artifacts in libraries; and interesting animals and plants in both, create startling but tempting images.

Much of this, imaginative librarians already do; but in a meager way that is often nonetheless competitive rather than cooperative with other institutions.

3) Looked at from a certain perspective, more fully utilizing resources is a form of sharing resources. A book circulated 30 times a year rather than 20, a picture looked at by 20,000 people rather than 10, shares resources in a fuller fashion. To move in that direction, the SED should launch a powerful public relations and public information program about the State's informational and cultural resources.

I now know what New York State does to tempt businesses to locate in Albany because its Commissioner of Commerce wore a mask in a hearing before the Legislature. Antics may not be suitable for libraries (although I am not sure) but every good resource needs to be advertised. Business long ago discerned that advertising and public relations are prudent and income-producing activities. Libraries need the opportunity to discover it for themselves.

4) High speed data processing, computer technology with its hardware and software, and management science, all arrived at about the same time to push business and other institutions into the total systems way of thinking about themselves. Not even when combined do they offer

solutions for all the problems of any institution. Yet they do provide a powerful tool to expedite resource sharing. Libraries especially at the community level have not made as much progress in using them as have other institutions. To plan for their fuller use while at the same time preventing blue sky expectations and resisting costly installations when inexpensive ones will do, the State should establish a modern age technology task force that would in a year's time present a program and its costs to put these new developments to work in the State's library systems. I would include in their charge an examination of all miniaturization and reproduction processes, e.g., microfilm, microfische and copying devices, to determine how they can best contribute to meeting user needs.

I am told by the Director of M.I.T.'s libraries that by 1990 there will be a revolution in the publishing field that will completely transform the ways in which libraries can provide information. He even talks of the possibility that the published book would become obsolete. A competent task force could begin to plan for the revolution, rather than allow the revolution to overwhelm us.

5) For planning purposes the SED has organized the State's universitites and colleges into eight regions. Regional thinking, they recognized there, is a prerequisite to the establishment of a system for sharing resources. Consequently SED should now organize the State into a single set of library regions, taking account of population, geography, and access to resources. Within each region, the libraries can establish smaller units. The goal is to establish a network of all libraries, so that no matter where a user starts or who he is he can gain access to the information he requires. All regions can take on

common tasks such as interlibrary loan within the region and in addition can undertake specialized functions related to existing strengths, e.g., the Albany region would centralize but not necessarily preempt legislative services.

A good beginning assignment for each region is the creation of an inventory of all library services within the region and a manpower inventory of staff specialists. Should this lead to demands for service across districts or systems so much the better; simplified accounting procedures are available for the reimbursements of costs.

What can be done across systems.

1) Most controversial of all the statements I will make is: align school libraries with public libraries and eventually join the two. The obstacles are mountainous but the payoff, in my judgment, would be rich. There are two principal obstacles: personnel and money. The human frailty of not wanting to give up what is mine and the propensity to see every change as a threatened loss create both types of obstacles. School librarians have their jobs, their status, their seniority, and, to some extent, their competence in the schools. With normal human concern they fear a transfer to the public libraries would cause the loss of all. Boards of Education now command the school library budget; no one can remember when anyone willingly gave up control of the purse. Perhaps if we can look closely enough we might find that, even at the very top, in the State Department of Education, there is a sufficient measure of territoriality to oppose any change.

Given the obstacles an immediate change is not likely. But the longer it will take the sooner we should start -- at the local levels first, in conferences to sort out the problems, then perhaps in a pilot

fashion in a promising community. However many steps it takes the mandate of law and the lure of money should ultimately find their proper place.

2) The classical production and transportation problem of peak loads also affects our libraries. I have in mind here, particularly, the sharp rise and fall in activity in university libraries associated with the phases of the school calendar. There are long periods of down time during vacations but there are slow periods in any week or indeed in any day, e.g., 9 A.M. to 12 A.M. In well-planned libraries staff assignments are correlated with use activity levels so that few librarians are present during slow times. If, as part of its incentive program, the State could fund even one additional librarian to staff each of the university libraries during periods of lull, the community would have informed access to books and serials not otherwise available to them.

Many university libraries make the service available now on a very limited basis. With adequate staff they could, and I believe in view of some public monies they already receive, would open their facilities more generously.

3) Although information needs are sometimes urgent, interloan service is slow. And frustrated, sometimes angry users are left waiting. The automobile makes it easy, even across very large regions, for motivated users to travel the distance to the library from which interloan service would have to retrive it. The problem is that out-of-area users are not welcome. If a voucher system existed so that a sending library could give the user a chit entitling him to use another library and if that other library collected the vouchers as

accounts receivable, accounts could easily be balanced. Taxpayers, librarians and users alike would be happy. Many universities now employ such a cross-registration system. A side benefit would be a reduction in the workload on the interlibrary system.

4) Systemize and extend central planning for acquisitions within regions. The thought, of course, is not a new one and informal arrangements now exist, between nearby universities, for example; but progress has been slow, largely because the tenderest sort of autonomy is threatened. Almost an academic freedom or First Amendement issue seems to be at stake: my right to purchase what my users need. As a matter of fact, in practice, important needs of many users are rarely at stake. A trustee may insist that a highly specialized encyclopedia be purchased or the personal interest and competence of a librarian may lead to a fine collection in photography.

Guidelines are needed: to establish categories of books that can freely be purchased at local libraries; to identify those books best housed in university libraries; to recognize special collections already existing in branch libraries, which by agreement could be enriched. The principles that would make possible a sensible central acquisition plan, I am sure, already exist; the problem is to motivate their implementation.

5) Requisite to any well established resource sharing program across systems is a competently manned hot line directly accessible to users. A sine qua non of its effective functioning is the presence of a regional union catalogue. There are experts who say that establishing a complete union catalogue is a prerequisite for any workable program of resource sharing. Librarians would know best whether or not that is the place to start.

What individual libraries can do.

The goal of sharing resources should also direct individual libraries to use their own resources more effectively and efficiently.

1) They can match hours with users' needs and free time more conscientiously than they do now. Americans no longer use their weekends as they did twenty years ago. Weekend colleges and Sunday department store openings exploit new opportunities. The eleven o'clock TV news has taught us all to stay up later. Many Americans avoid the traffic rush by staying home on holidays. Churches open on Sundays and pastors take their day off on Monday. Maybe libraries can open all day Sunday and librarians can rest on Monday. Should libraries open at 1 P.M. and close at 11 P.M.? And stay open on holidays?

As effective merchandisers know well, provide the service and use follows, particularly if it is well advertised.

2) Every library needs a program of operations research; only by studying its past operations can it plan its future. Where circumstances allow, libraries should automate the data gathering, using computers or other technology; minimally they should gather the data as a routine part of current operations. The Princeton University Library recently and accidentally discovered a book on its open shelves that no reader had requested for twenty years. No doubt it had been catalogued, moved, and dusted during that entire period. The fact is startling: The librarian discovered in 1977 that no one had used the book since 1957. The average librarian, I hope, if he knew of such a book would have sent it to the nearest last copy depository.

I have never seen a sign in a library inviting me to jot down a book title I could not find in the catalogue or an area of study I

believed was inadequately represented. No one likes to look for trouble but such trouble more than pays its keep by enriching the library's knowledge of user needs.

Is there any place in the library's processes for listing missing or vandalized books? And is such a list regularly fed into acquisitons? No business, except a publicly subsidized one, can survive without a continuously examined history of its operations. Even with the subsidy, libraries need to learn more about themslves and their wares.

Major obstacles exist.

In my days as a city bureaucrat I remember will the triad of responses to proposed change; I used them myself. The sequence is: "we don't have the problem," "what you propose won't solve it," "we are already doing it." Of each part of what I have written, the cognoscenti could use one or another of those statements. With accuracy? I leave that for the discussants to say. Besides attitudes that resist change there are some very hard and heavy rocks in the road ahead.

1) The public library district and its library board holds a powerful jurisdiction over the functioning of its library. There are comparable powers that reside in each of the other systems. The midnight has not yet arrived that will turn those powers into pumpkins.

2) For all I know there may be laws on the books that make impossible any full program of resource sharing.

3) No important change ever occurred without the investment of money; and libraries have been poor competitors for scarce State dollars.

Someone, I think Blake, wrote, "If the sun and moon should doubt,/ They'd immediately go out." That's bad astronomy but good psychology.

This Governor's conference should mandate an overall plan for sharing library resources. Without it, no movement is possible. It should make clear that a pussyfooting approach to it and a watery commitment are not acceptable. A resolution of support for Assembly Bill #9975 would be a good beginning.

The leadership exists in what is essentially a strong set of library systems. Convinced that cooperation is what is wanted, they have the competence to lead the way.

Timothy Costello, who holds the Ph.D. degree from Fordham University, is President of Adelphi University, New York City. From 1966-72 he was Deputy Mayor - City Administrator of New York City. Prior to that, he was Professor of Psychology and Management, New York University.

RESPONSE

It would have been so much easier to warm up the Xerox machine and copy Dr. Costello's position paper, could I have but agreed to toto rather than in part. But if there is one characteristic shared by librarians, it is never to take the easier route.

The opening paragraph of Dr. Costello's paper states:

"Libraries exist to satisfy information needs of users and to provide recreational and cultural source materials. They find it difficult to do so within budgets authorized by local and state government". This statement can provoke only complete agreement but isn't it regrettable that in today's world, we have to use the verb "exist" in lieu of a verb like "flourish"?

Conscientious librarians have indeed wrestled with the concerns involved in resource sharing regarding standardization and centralization of technical processing. They have assessed the shrinking budget and considered it being devoured completely by the implementation of such a program as resource sharing. Believe it or not, librarians have a built-in immunity as a result of the constant threats to their security in their chosen profession. Such worries have certainly not sapped their strength to move toward the restructuring of their services and the redistributing of their financial resources. Belated though the move may be, we librarians concur with Pope's admonishment that "Be not the first by whom the new are tried" and you can believe, we will not be "the last to lay the old aside".

Endearingly, you may call us old-fashioned - call ours an old-fashioned profession. But then we will turn again to Pope who

furnished us with still another quote. We are "not free from faults, not yet too vain to mend".

Admittedly New York has made the progress outlined by Dr. Costello but the Empire State has been dragging its feet. Progressive strides have been made by the 713 independent public libraries through inter-relationships with the 22 public library systems. Resource sharing has been enjoyed through the 9 3R's Councils. When one considers the limited funding available, the efforts of these systems' approaches are laudable. Only the school libraries have been neglected in a push for any form of networking although the base for such exists in the 44 Boards of Cooperative Educational Services.

New York State can not point to its School Library Media Centers and say "We're No. 1". New York State's School Library Media Centers, in relation to those of the other fifty states do not even rank in the top ten percent if we are to rely upon the data derived from the National Inventory of Library Needs, 1975 and submitted to NCLIS in a study by Boyd Ladd in March of 1977. In this study, the Empire State ranks 9th in print materials, 21st in non-print materials and 16th in professional staffing. These figures, gloomy as they are, project a picture even more dismal if we consider that New York ranks 22nd in yearly acquisitions for print materials, 29th in hours of service, 25th in space provided and 22nd in operating expenditures. Recognizing these damaging statistics requires strength; applying these same strengths to rectifying the situation is the challenge now facing school librarians, Boards of Education and more explicitly the State Education Department which parented the advances made in the other branches of library service.

In outlining progressive steps, Dr. Costello points out that some school and public libraries are housed in the same building. Progress - no way! On this I speak from first hand knowledge and would like to cite my personal experience.

I was the librarian in just such a combined library program. As the school librarian, I selected the books to be purchased with school budgeted funds. The Public Library Board of Trustees selected the books for the public library acquisitions. I cataloged all of them being very careful to precede the accession number with a P or an S. The school included grades K-12. Naturally, with this span of age levels, much reading guidance had to be employed with the students. No particular scrutiny was necessary for the public as they simply did not use the facility. It was open after school hours and in the summer but the public did not appear. Some twenty years ago, the collection was separated and the public library books were moved to a room in the town hall. Today, that public library branch occupies two large rooms and the town hall is being expanded to make room for additional library space. On the other hand, that school library which was left with but 2500 books has become four school libraries with a total collection of 44 000 books. There wasn't disharmony in acquisitioning but there was no melody at all in utilization. "Why?", you may ask. I can only explain it as perhaps a feeling of "being comfortable" in the minds of the clientele. The students were "at home" in the school; the public was not.

Today, however the secondary school library has expanded to the point that the public and student clientele utilize the facility's resources two evenings per week. The Public Library does not have

evening hours. The school and public libraries interchange resources and excellent rapport between the two exists. It has taken twenty years but the threads of networking have been crocheted on a very successful scale. Given the time, given the funding - it can be done.

However, there's one ingredient that we seem to overlook. That is we must be given the right people with the dedication to a philosophy of service in order to implement and advance such a theory. There is that feeling of fear and insecurity present in all of us and librarians are no exceptions. We all feel threatened by change and until the feeling of complete security is established, and this concern for the untried is alleviated, progress cannot be realized.

I would like to recommend the addition of Assumption number five for Dr. Costello's list as follows:

5) There are at present in New York State 750 school districts with 4500 buildings addressing the needs of just under 3,000,000 school children. These children representing approximately 1/13 of the total number of the children in the United States are deserving of the benefits of systems participation and access to materials needed for their education.

Dr. Costello has enumerated responsibilities for which he feels the State should carry the weight. Should there not be Federal responsibilities other than the provision of matching funds? It is not true that Federal fund carrots are dangled, nibbled and then withdrawn? The revision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act has painfully reduced funding to school libraries.

The proposed ten year funding program to induce resource sharing is truly realistic but perhaps too optimistic. The legislative bill A9975 -S8252 is totally inadequate not only in its funding but in the one year allotment for implementing steps to include school libraries in the net working plan. Incentive awards must be provided school boards to encourage meeting standards at the local level as well as to be qualified to participate in a cooperative resource sharing.

The restructuring of the State Education Department to embrace in one office, headed by a Deputy Commissioner, all libraries, museums, botanical and zoological entities has considerable merit. Included would be educational communications and mass communications, wouldn't it?

The launching of a powerful public relations and public information program about the State's informational and cultural resources is another step forward that is long overdue. The Madison Avenue charisma should become a part of our library programs. Today, advertising is the name of the game. Just as "baseball, apple pie and Chevrolet" have their commercial - so should libraries - perhaps in conjunction with their closest allies; namely, Motherhood and the American Flag.

State leadership and support in the use of date processing, computer technology, sophisticated hardware and managment expertise would do much to launch and expedite resource sharing. Those institutions already employing the use of microfiche, microfilm, etc., should not be penalized but should be presented equitable incentive aid to explore even more advanced technology.

The obsolescence of the book! The revolution of 1990! It was Carlyle who said, "The true University is a collection of books". Surely we could be suffocated by trying to save all of the printed words but to produce cardiac arrest in the heart of the cultural community must not be allowed. 1990 - Why, that's less than twelve years away.

The advancement of a single set of regions will naturally result in competition and a jockeying for positions of administrative authority. Why not utilize existing strengths, allying Public Library Systems, 3R's Councils and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services? Each participating library would join the system with which it is most comfortable and with which shared resources would be most habitable. Each of the participating libraries should possess a specialization unique to it alone. Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote in The Poet at the Breakfast Table that "every library should try to be complete on something, if it were only the history of pinheads". In all seriousness, the building of specialized collections at the local levels can but enhance the quality of the systems approach. In "Early Taste for Reading" published in The Enquirer, William Godwin wrote, "He that revels in a well-chosen library, has innumerable dishes and all of admirable flavours". Networking will provide a well balanced full course meal rather than a "Big Mac" although it may be equated to a progressive dinner party.

The identification of the strengths and weaknesses of all agencies considered for interrelationship and resource sharing is the starting point.

Now calmly and hopefully, without emotion, I must refute the statement that school libraries should be aligned with public libraries and eventually join the two. The scars from the last ten round match

have scarcely faded. Neither group supported such a merger in the past and the introduction of such a premise is tantamount to commiting hara-kiri to the whole idea of networking. Public libraries do not wish to lose their autonomy. School libraries are designed to give the first exposure to information sources and to mold the child's information behavior. School librarians have been trained to perform such teaching assignments, have acquired expertise in curriculum, have the opportunity to match the child with the resource in a meaningful association and form a partnership with the subject teacher to give significance to learning library skills. Tomorrow's Public Library patron is today's school student. As Wadsworth said, "the child is father of the man". School libraries should be aligned with Boards of Cooperative Educational Services. Forty-four of them statewide are ready to set in motion the mechanics of sharing. Many of them are now doing just that with films, audiovisual software, equipment repairs, production of teaching materials and sharing of realia. Public libraries have their systems organized and expanding to include schools holds little enchantment for them.

The idea of utilizing the resources of the Colleges and Universities is an exalted one for those areas where such institutions exist but one must be mindful that 63% of the State's 713 public libraries are in rural areas serving populations averaging about 7500 people. To them, the University is a mirage, not an oasis in relation to sharing resources.

The utilization by the public of University resources during the Universities' slow hours may have merit but those same lull hours are usually peak work production hours for the library patron. It would be difficult to convince the public and probably even more difficult to convince the University's Board of Trustees - darn near impossible if

the institution is privately supported. The avid library patron is not interested in adapting his library visits and needs to the calendar of a college or university.

By all means, let's employ the voucher system for utilization across systems lines. A State library card recognized in all libraries is another excellent idea for expanding accessibility to materials in all libraries.

In reference to the pre-requisite for the establishment of a union catalog for effective functioning of a systems network, you could probably get five different answers from five different librarians. I feel confident, however, that all would agree that a union listing following a uniform format is essential for the regional center. Equally essential is the toll free tie line from each participating library to the center and among the participating libraries. If needed materials are in the next neighboring library, why waste time waiting for a courier service. Drive over!

Libraries and librarians, despite being old-fashioned, are indeed flexible and adaptable to change. Believe it or not, they have expended considerable energies in "changing the image". Libraries and librarians are competitive. The challenge to compete with churches, however, requires some soul searching - the competition with department store openings - somewhat less. To substantiate the theory that you never know until you try, we experimented at a local high school where the library is open four days per week after school for an hour and a half. Only on Friday afternoon was it closed fifteen minutes after school dismissal. It was assumed the students would be anxious to leave for the weekend. It was a fact that the staff was. Such repercussion!

The students were pounding the doors to get materials to tide them over the weekend and to do the research restricted by more mundane daily studies during the week. Unfortunately - Dr. Costello, it didn't follow that the librarian rested on Monday.

Do you mean there exists a breed of librarian today that isn't data oriented? I thought all librarians had counters for veins. Inventories, circulation statistics, attendance recordings, additions, withdrawals, AV equipment utilizations are usually the major fringe benefits to the job. Is there a librarian who hasn't included some losses and vandalized books in the desiderata file to be ordered and reordered? The same approach applies to all requested titles not currently available in the collection. "Ask and you shall receive". Somewhere, somehow - we try to find the right material. You may say, "that's not typical - but who wants to be typical?"

The triad of responses has served well. Dr. Costello, the problem has not been exaggerated. There are indeed major obstacles. What you propose has highly constructive values but is not the total solution. Yes, we are doing some or most of the recommendations already. There - the trap worked. I seized upon the "we are doing it" and relaxed with it. Relaxed only as long as it took to move on to the next line of print in your User's Perspective where complete agreement was realized. You are so right when you state that there are many hard and heavy rocks in the road ahead. You'll agree, won't you, that it is a long and winding road? There are judicial powers in all areas of librarianship - Public Libraries, 3R's Councils, Boards of Cooperative Educational Services and local Boards of Education.

To clear the harder and heavier rocks will require some expensive bulldozing. Eventually New York State will have another super highway - this time, a thruway for superior library services. At the Governor's Conference in June, the delegates who are really the Civil Engineers of Interrelationships and Resource Sharing for New York State's Libraries will take out their surveying instruments for such a roadbed.

Frances D. Clark was educated at Converse College and SUNY/ALBANY. She is Director of School Libraries, Cornwall Central School District, and President, School Library Media Section, New York Library Association. Prior to her present position she taught English and served as librarian at Cornwall High School.